

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A continuous method of recycling a metal/organic laminate comprising metal laminated with an organic material, the method comprising:

providing a reactor comprising a first chamber containing a first bed of particulate microwave absorbing material and a first rotary stirrer, and a second chamber containing a second bed of particulate microwave absorbing material and a second rotary stirrer, the second chamber having an exit from the reactor;

introducing laminate and additional particulate microwave absorbing material into the first chamber containing the first bed of particulate microwave absorbing material;

stirring the particulate microwave absorbing material and laminate in the first chamber using the first rotary stirrer and applying microwave energy to the mixture of particulate microwave absorbing material and laminate in the first chamber to heat the particulate microwave absorbing material in the mixture to a temperature sufficient to pyrolyse organic material in the laminate;

transferring a portion of the mixture in the first chamber to the second chamber containing the second bed of particulate microwave absorbing material;

stirring the mixture in the second chamber using the second rotary stirrer and applying microwave energy to the mixture in the second chamber to heat the particulate microwave absorbing material in the mixture to a temperature sufficient to pyrolyse organic material remaining in the laminate, whereby laminate or delaminated metal migrates towards and floats on the upper surface of the mixture in the second chamber, ~~said second rotary stirrer rotating in a horizontal plane and being so~~

configured as wherein at least the rotary stirrer in the second chamber is configured as a horizontally extending blade rotating about a vertical axis at its midpoint, the upper edge or upper surface of the blade sloping down from said midpoint towards the extremities of the blade to fluidise the mixture such that the upper surface of the fluidised mixture has a radial profile that biases laminate or delaminated metal floating on the fluidised mixture to migrate radially outwards;

transferring a portion of the mixture in the second chamber to the exit from the reactor; and

recovering metal from the exit from the reactor.

2. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein the transfer of the portion of the mixture in the first chamber to the second chamber is via one or more intermediate chambers each containing a bed of particulate microwave absorbing material stirred by a rotary stirrer.

3. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein the reactor consists of two reaction chambers.

4. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 further comprising recovering pyrolysed products from the reactor.

5. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the organic material comprises plastic or paper material, or both.

6. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the particulate microwave absorbing material is heated to a temperature in the range from 500 to 600°C.

7. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the particulate microwave absorbing material is carbon black powder.
8. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 further comprising providing an inert or reducing atmosphere in the reactor.
9. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim [[1]] § wherein the atmosphere is nitrogen gas.
10. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the additional particulate microwave absorbing material is mixed with the laminate before entering the reactor.
11. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the additional particulate microwave absorbing material or the laminate, or both, is preheated before entering the reactor.
12. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein particulate microwave absorbing material is preheated in the reactor before mixing with the laminate.
13. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the action of the stirrer in the first chamber transfers particulate microwave absorbing material from the first chamber to the next chamber.
14. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 wherein a portion of the particulate microwave absorbing material in the second chamber exits from the reactor with the metal.

15. (Original) A method according to claim 14 further comprising separating the exited particulate microwave absorbing material from the exited metal, and recycling the separated particulate microwave absorbing material to the reactor.

16. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the rotary stirrers describe overlapping paths whereby the action of the rotary stirrers transfers a portion of the particulate microwave absorbing material from the first chamber to the next chamber.

17. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the exit is through a sidewall of the second chamber, and has a bottom surface disposed at a height at or close to the level of the top of the bed in said chamber, such that the metal, and optionally a portion of the particulate microwave absorbing material, exits when its level exceeds the height of said bottom surface.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim [[18]] 1 wherein at least the rotary stirrer in the second chamber is configured as a trapezoidal blade rotating about its midpoint.

20. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the metal/organic laminate comprises aluminium laminated with an organic material.

21. (Currently Amended) A reactor for recycling a metal/organic laminate comprising metal laminated with an organic material, comprising:

a first chamber containing a first bed of particulate microwave absorbing material and a first rotary stirrer;

a second chamber containing a second bed of particulate microwave absorbing material and a second rotary stirrer, the second chamber having an exit from the reactor;

means for introducing laminate and additional particulate microwave absorbing material into the first chamber containing the first bed of particulate microwave absorbing material;

means for transferring a portion of the mixture in the first chamber to the second chamber containing the second bed of particulate microwave absorbing material;

means for applying microwave energy to the mixture of particulate microwave absorbing material and laminate in the first and second chambers to heat the particulate microwave absorbing material in the mixture to a temperature sufficient to pyrolyse organic material in the laminate;

means for transferring a portion of the mixture in the second chamber to the exit from the reactor; and

means for recovering metal from the exit from the reactor,

wherein ~~said second rotary stirrer rotates in a horizontal plane and is so configured as~~ at least the rotary stirrer in the second chamber is configured as a horizontally extending blade rotating about a vertical axis at its midpoint, the upper edge or upper surface of the blade sloping down from said midpoint towards the extremities of the blade to fluidise the mixture such that the upper surface of the

fluidised mixture has a radial profile that biases laminate or delaminated metal floating on the fluidised mixture to migrate radially outwards.

22. (Original) A reactor according to claim 21 further comprising one or more chambers intermediate the first and second chambers, each containing a bed of particulate microwave absorbing material stirred by a rotary stirrer.

23. (Original) A reactor according to claim 21 consisting of two reaction chambers.

24. (Previously Presented) A reactor according to claim 21 wherein the particulate microwave absorbing material is carbon black powder or activated carbon powder.

25. (Previously Presented) A reactor according to claim 21 further comprising an inert or reducing atmosphere in the reactor.

26. (Original) A reactor according to claim 25 wherein the atmosphere is nitrogen gas.

27. (Previously Presented) A reactor according to claim 21 wherein the stirrer in the first chamber transfers a portion of the mixture in the first chamber to the next chamber.

28. (Previously Presented) A reactor according to claim 21 further comprising means for separating the exited particulate microwave absorbing material from the exited metal, and for recycling the separated particulate microwave absorbing material to the reactor.

29. (Previously Presented) A reactor according to claim 21 wherein the rotary stirrers describe overlapping paths whereby the action of the rotary stirrers transfers a portion of the particulate microwave absorbing material from the first chamber to the next chamber.

30. (Previously Presented) A reactor according to claim 21 wherein the exit is through a sidewall of the second chamber, and has a bottom surface disposed at a height at or close to the level of the top of the bed in said chamber, such that the metal, and optionally a portion of the particulate microwave absorbing material, exits when its level exceeds the height of said bottom surface.

31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently Amended) A reactor according to claim [[31]] 21 wherein at least the rotary stirrer in the second chamber is configured as a trapezoidal blade rotating about its midpoint.

33. (Previously Presented) A reactor according to claim 21 wherein the metal/organic laminate comprises aluminium laminated with an organic material.